

Memorandum

Subject: Option Paper on Federal, State, and Local Interaction
in Personnel Management

Date: 9/22/77
In Reply Refer To:

From: Joe Coupal, Manager, Task Force #9

Your Reference:

To: Dwight Ink, Executive Director

Attached is Option Paper Five, prepared by the Task Force on Federal, State, and Local Interaction in Personnel Management.

Reviewers will note that this Option Paper is quite different from the others developed by the Federal Personnel Management Project. It deals primarily with Federal assistance to improve State and local government personnel management, rather than improving the Federal government's personnel system. The attached outline of the basic problem areas around which the Task Force developed the issues and options may be helpful in reviewing the paper.

Because the paper deals with management from an intergovernmental perspective, the options must be considered in relation to other reorganization studies which are underway in closely related areas (e.g., planning requirements, civil rights compliance, grants). The final recommendations of this Task Force will be fully coordinated with these other study groups.

The Option Paper also makes specific inquiry into possible areas of Federal assistance to improve State and local general management, because of the close relationship of overall management to the management of personnel resources. The Task Force does not presume that additional appropriations are needed in overall Federal assistance to make improvements in the general management area. Options regarding the possible size of a general management assistance program are presented solely for discussion purposes. If a coordinated general management assistance effort is initiated, it could mean redirecting currently available resources rather than any increase in financial assistance.

The time constraint imposed on the preparation of the paper precluded the additional research into the background of some of the issues that might have been desirable. However, the Task Force made a review of information and reports available and talked with many Federal, State, and local officials. The Task Force was also aware that the responders to this paper would generally be knowledgeable in Federal, State, and local relations. We feel, therefore, that the issues and options outlined provide a completely adequately basis for meaningful discussions and suggestions from responders that will result in constructive recommendations for improvements in the Federal, State, and local personnel area.

Attachments

BASIC PROBLEM AREAS CONSIDERED BY THE TASK FORCE ON FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL INTERACTION

I. PERCEPTIONS OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

State and local personnel administration is often affected significantly by Federal programs and proposals which are not linked to Federal assistance efforts. Although these programs are intended to meet national objectives, they are often perceived as unwarranted Federal involvement. This State and local perception is usually based on: (1) feelings that the Federal government acts in these areas without being fully aware of the impact on State and local governments, (2) inadequate resources to implement the program or policy, and (3) a belief that the matter is properly one which should be decided at the State or local level.

II. STATE AND LOCAL PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

While significant improvements have taken place in State and local personnel management in recent years, new and continuing problems exist, including: (1) inadequate resources to design, develop and implement programs directly related to Federal initiatives and programs (e.g., CETA, selection guidelines) or to provide development and training of employees, (2) lack of incentive for interjurisdictional cooperation in personnel areas to reduce overlap and duplication, to improve services to citizens, and to reduce costs to cooperating jurisdictions, (3) lack of information on current successful personnel programs and projects in other jurisdictions, which often results in multiple jurisdictions working on the same problem simultaneously, and (4) lack of systematic needs determination mechanisms which would permit research to be concentrated on major personnel problems common to many jurisdictions.

III. PROLIFERATION AND INCONSISTENCY OF PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

Personnel requirements which State and local governments must follow in administering many Federally-aided programs are extensive, not uniformly applied, and often inconsistent. Although their purpose is to encourage proper and efficient administration of Federal programs, they are often viewed as obstacles to overcome in effective administration. As examples of specific concerns, State and local officials often (1) view hiring and selection requirements as cumbersome and restrictive, (2) feel hampered in establishing policymaking jobs exempt from personnel requirements, (3) establish two separate personnel systems in order to meet requirements for staffing Federally-funded positions, and (4) do not feel accountable for personnel systems established solely to meet Federal requirements.

IV. STATE AND LOCAL GENERAL MANAGEMENT

The growth in State and local governments, coupled with their increasing responsibilities for administering many of the nation's domestic programs, has severely strained State and local management capacities. Although there is some feeling that similar Federal assistance should be available in all general management areas (e.g., personnel, planning, financial management, program evaluation), there is no specific, coordinated effort to help State and local chief executives to strengthen their overall management systems.

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Federal Personnel Management Project

Option Paper Number Five

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in Personnel Management

September 20, 1977

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